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SUBJECT: SURVIVING AGAINST ALL ODDS

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Classified By: AMB. JON R. PURNELL, FOR REASONS 1.4 (B, D)

¶1. (C) Summary. Despite the GOU's closure of the U.S. NGO Counterpart International in June 2006, the organization's Community and Humanitarian Assistance Program (CHAP) has been able to continue operations, thanks in large part to its local representative's re-registering as a private entrepreneur. Since the entrepreneur's name is not included as a consignee on any of the humanitarian shipments, the containers have been distributed as planned to recipients around the country. Since 1998, the CHAP program has distributed over \$82 million worth of assistance, of which \$3.5 million has been distributed since Counterpart's closure last year. The Cabinet of Ministers has tacitly approved this arrangement, which could serve as a success story in other countries where the government has shut down NGOs but continues to see value in allowing humanitarian assistance. End summary.

¶2. (C) Despite the GOU's closure of the U.S. NGO Counterpart International in June 2006, the organization's Community and Humanitarian Assistance Program (CHAP) has been able to continue operating, due in large part to its resourceful local representative, Kamol Khusainov, who registered as a private entrepreneur. His firm, "Khusainov K.H.," which was established in summer 2006, is authorized to provide "information support services" and "documentation processing." Khusainov emphasized that he is not the consignee for any of the shipments, and therefore merely oversees the delivery and distribution process. (Note: Since 1998, the CHAP program has provided over \$82 million worth of humanitarian assistance to Uzbek recipients, with the State Department covering the transportation costs. End note.)

¶3. (C) Khusainov told the DCM that he has continued to meet with Vladislav Bolkonov, the head of the Cabinet of Ministers Working Group on Humanitarian Assistance, Health, and Social Issues, who is responsible for approving all humanitarian shipments. Bolkonov has been willing to work with Khusainov, acknowledging that the consignee is the end recipient rather than Khusainov. (Note: CHAP recipients include the Republican Children's Fund, health departments, labor and social protection offices, and local NGOs and associations. End note.) Khusainov told Poloff that after becoming a private entrepreneur he opened a new bank account at the Korea Development Bank (KDB), where he receives his salary by fund transfer in his capacity as a private citizen, rather than in any company's name.

¶4. (C) Since Counterpart's June 2006 closure, Khusainov told

us that CHAP has shipped clothing and household items worth over \$3.5 million to Uzbek recipients. According to Khusainov, two containers have so far cleared customs in 2007, with a further five awaiting clearance. On January 28-30, Poloff accompanied Khusainov and CHAP's Tbilisi-based regional director Sergey Khomchenko on site monitoring visits to hospitals, orphanages, schools, and Republican Children's Fund offices in the Ferghana Valley (reftel). All assistance was fully inventoried, documented, and accounted for. In Namangan the program distributed clothing to several needy families, who commented that with all their disposable income spent on food, CHAP support enables them to adequately clothe their children.

15. (C) Comment: The key ingredient in CHAP's ability to persevere in such a restrictive environment has been a quick-thinking local manager, who secured both his own organization's confidence for this arrangement and the government's blessing. This success story could have applicability in other countries where NGOs have been shut down, but where governments still see value in humanitarian aid.

PURNELL